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OBSERVATIONS.

NEWS, politics, theology, literature, natural hiſtory, and the fine arts, have all been induſtriouſly provided for by various inſtitutions, and each by numerous periodical publications; while *Health and Agriculture*, ſubjects, which, in one way or another, "*come home to every man's buſineſs and boſom*," have been in a meaſure neglected; at leaſt, nothing heretofore has ever been attempted in a way, all circumſtances conſidered, ſo as to put the means of information on theſe ſubjects *fairly within the reach of every perſon*. To effect ſo deſirable an end, is the deſign of this publication. It has for its object the wideſt diffuſion, and the greateſt poſſible extent of the knowledge of the beſt means of preſerving the health, and of promoting the agriculture, of a growing and an extenſive country. Theſe conſiderations, it is hoped, will be received as a ſufficient apology for having, at this time, added another to the number of periodical publications, which, at the preſent day, ſolicit the patronage of the public.

Idle ſpeculation and mere theory, unſupported by facts, come not within the deſign of this work. A humbler, and, as we conceive, a more uſeful intention with us, is, to collect and bring forward that information, which ſhall be calculated "to ſupply the wants and relieve the neceſſities of mankind, and thereby *render human life more comfortable*;" information by which the productions of the land may be multiplied, and the toils of the huſbandman ſhortened. It is to extend the boundaries of knowledge and of ſkill, in the important concerns of rural and domeſtic life; to catch improvements as they riſe; to excite inquiry where it is not; to call forth obſervation; to bring forward facts; and, "by inculcating the importance of ordinary things and of practical, every day truths," to render the great body of our fellow-citizens more healthy, wealthy, underſtanding, and happy.

To this end, the joint co-operation of every friend to health and agriculture is moſt anxiouſly ſolicited. Books are before us, and from theſe, many and various important articles will often be ſelected. But what we are particularly ſolicitous to obtain, is, the obſervations, the practices, the growing experience of medical and practical huſbandmen, in our country, by which health, in any inſtance,

may have been preſerved; diſeaſe more ſucceſsfully combated; the cauſes and the acceſſion of our epidemics better aſcertained; the induſtry of our country more happily directed; expenſes diminiſhed; the fertility of the ſoil increaſed; and which, being generally promulgated and known, might extend the benefits reſulting from ſuch improvements and diſcoveries, uniformly and extenſively through the country. The want of an education, it is hoped, will, in no inſtance, be offered as an apology for the withholding of theſe ſervices. Every man capable of correct obſervation, is capable of becoming a valuable correſpondent to this work. He need not go far aſide from his ordinary concerns. Nature is the proper theatre for the ſtudy of theſe arts; fields and bed-chambers of the ſick, the beſt apartments. It is not the *manner*, but the *matter*, which muſt ſtamp the value of ſuch communications. "Many of our practical huſbandmen, who add ſound judgment to nice obſervation and long experience, accumulate large ſtores of knowledge; and too frequently, this not being perpetuated by writing or printing, dies with him, whoſe life was expended in the collection of it."* How much precious information, in this way, has been loſt to mankind! We would fondly anticipate better things of many, who may honor this work with their attention. A medium of communication is here ſet open, through which, every one is ſolicited, in the language moſt natural and eaſy to himſelf, to come forward, and propoſe his doubts, ſuggeſt his inquiries, or communicate his knowledge, to the public eye. "When every one contributes ſomething, general improvement progreſſes, and the ſum of knowledge, thus accumulated, will quickly reſemble thoſe extenſive and fathomleſs waters, which were collected from a variety of ſmall ſtreams."†

We cannot conclude theſe obſervations without noticing our ſenſe of gratitude and obligation, to thoſe gentlemen and ſocieties, who, at our ſolicitation, have engaged us their ſupport, and the favor of their communications, for this work. The knowledge and the experience of theſe gentlemen, many of them, in Medicine and Agriculture, their zeal for improvements, and the ardor of their inquiries, promiſe, in time, the acquiſition of much uſeful information to the public. Alſo, gentlemen of the clergy, to whom our communications have been addreſſed, who, in many inſtances, by a prompt attention to the objects of thoſe communications, have rendered us very important ſervices; they alſo will be pleaſed to accept the aſſurances of our high conſideration and reſpect. We will not withhold from them and the public, our expectations of their uſefulneſs and importance to us, in the preſent undertaking. Being, many of them, gentlemen of much agricultural information; alſo poſſeſſing ſcience; and placed as they are, in ſituations to ſee, notice, and obſerve the riſe, progreſs, and termination of diſeaſes, particularly epidemical diſeaſes; practices and improvements in agriculture, together with extraordinary incidents of every kind, each one in his own town or pariſh; under theſe circumſtances, our expectations are unto them, for much important information.

Thus have we endeavored, by a few obſervations, to give a general illuſtration of our deſign. Of our induſtry and ſucceſs in the execution of it, it muſt now be ſubmitted to the public to form an opinion from the execution of the work.

Boſton, January, 1806.

* *Editors of the Medical Repoſitory.* † *Rev. Mr.* FOSTER'S *Oration.*

MEDICAL.

DR. ADAMS,

ONE object contemplated in your publication, as I find it expreſſed in the proſpectus of the work, is, "To inſtruct the attendants on the ſick how they may beſt aid the means preſcribed by their phyſician." Comporting with this deſign, I ſend you the following extract from Dr. PARKINSON's *Medical Admonitions*, which I have a deſire to ſee publiſhed in the REGISTER, and which I moſt devoutly wiſh may receive that general and particular attention, to which, by its importance, it is juſtly entitled.

Your's, &c. C. D.

January, 1806.

The Deſpair and Inactivity of Nurſes, under certain Circumſtances, often fatal to their Patients.—An Inability of Swallowing, by no means ſo common as it is conceived to be.—The Way in which Nurſes are deceived.—How to proceed under ſuch Appearances.

"ON the appearance of thoſe ſymptoms, more eſpecially in fevers, which in general are ſuppoſed to be the harbingers of death, the deſpair and inactivity produced in the minds of the attendants, however much to be regretted, can by no means be wondered at, the ſymptoms ſeeming to ſhew that death muſt ſoon put an end to the calamities of the unhappy ſufferer. So great a degree of deſpair, indeed, poſſeſſes the by-ſtanders, in theſe diſtreſſing caſes, that frequently, when the medical man ſees conſiderable ground for hope, they will, in the ſtrongeſt terms, condemn all attempts for his recovery, as uſeleſs and cruel, ſince they imagine, by theſe ſuppoſed vain attempts, his torments are increaſed, and their duration prolonged. To the frequency with which this idea is adopted, may be attributed the death of numbers; for it ſeldom happens, when this notion is entertained, that the ſtrongeſt remonſtrances of the phyſician can produce the leaſt exertions of the attendants, except indeed during the time he is preſent; for immediately after his departure all exertions ceaſe. Such conduct cannot find a ſufficient excuſe in miſapplied tender-

neſs, ſince the conſequence reſulting from ſo culpable an omiſſion, may be the death of one, who otherwiſe might have been ſaved; for, in all the long catalogue of diſeaſes to which we are ſubject, there are none in which ſymptoms of ſo alarming an appearance are to be found, and where ſo great a poſſibility of recovery may exiſt, as in putrid, nervous, and bilious fevers. Inſtances of recovery from theſe diſeaſes have been ſo really wonderful, that ſo long as the patient breathes, his attendants ſhould not devote themſelves to deſpair, but ſhould perſiſt in their endeavors with unabated aſſiduity.

"It is a circumſtance that muſt have occurred often to every medical man, that having left a patient in one or the other of theſe fevers, with the moſt earneſt entreaties to his attendants to ſupply him regularly with medicines, and almoſt conſtantly with drink, and with nouriſhment, he ſhall be told at his next viſit, that they have not been able to procure the ſwallowing of a drop of either; when, perhaps, if the phyſician himſelf ſhould make the trial, he would experience very little difficulty in getting him to ſwallow a conſiderable quantity.

"To aſcertain the cauſe of this difference of ſucceſs, in the different attempts of the nurſe and the phyſician, and to point out the proper method to be uſed in theſe ſituations, ſhall now be attempted.

"In the advanced periods of theſe fevers, the brain and the whole nervous ſyſtem are in ſo deranged a ſtate, that a ſlight ſtimulus ſeldom excites the correſponding idea which it was uſed to produce in health. When, therefore, a patient is in this ſtate, the merely emptying a ſpoonful of liquor into the mouth, is not ſufficient to excite thoſe muſcles into action, by which the act of ſwallowing is performed. The liquor, therefore, remains in the mouth, until it eſcapes out at the corner of the lips; or elſe, from a drop inſinuating itſelf into the windpipe, the whole quantity, from the violence and ſuddenneſs of the irritation, is thrown forcibly out at the mouth and noſtrils.

"The appearances, in either of theſe caſes, ſeem, at firſt ſight, to warrant the concluſion that is uſually drawn from them, *that the patient has totally loſt the power of ſwallowing.* But if the patient be ſo much arouſed from his delirious or comatoſe ſtate, as to be apprized of the *nature* and *intention* of the endeavors that are making, he will generally be found ready enough to aſſiſt them. After rouſing him, by gently ſhaking, ſpeaking to him, raiſing him in the bed, &c. a ſpoon filled with the liquor that is intended to be given him, ſhould be put into his mouth, moving it about againſt the tongue, lips, and ſides of the mouth, until he is diſcovered to have

ſwallowed the few drops that have fallen from the ſpoon; it now appearing that the muſcles ſerving to deglutition [ſwallowing] are capable of performing their office, the whole quantity is to be poured into the mouth, and followed by as much more as may be thought neceſſary, ſince, after having been thus rouſed into action, it will be ſome little time before they relapſe into their previous ſtate of inſenſibility.

"It is believed, by a careful attention to theſe rules, the ſufferings of the ſick, in many inſtances, would be greatly mitigated, and oftentimes that lives might be ſaved."

AGRICULTURAL.

Remarks on Fruit Trees.—Their State of Decay.—Often occaſioned by injudicious Pruning.—A View of Mr. Forſyth's Mode of healing and reſtoring to Health and Vigor all wounded and decayed Trees.

THE culture of the apple tree forms a capital object in American huſbandry. And, indeed, when we conſider the abundant, pleaſant, wholeſome, and exhilarating beverage which the fruit of this tree affords, we cannot too much applaud the deſign. The mode of culture, however, is very defective: perhaps there is no branch of American huſbandry, which calls more loudly for reform. The pruning of trees eſpecially, as it is but too generally practiſed, is truly *barbarous*, if it be allowable ſo to ſpeak of wounds, mutilations and bruiſes.

On entering an orchard, our attention is ſuddenly and forcibly arreſted by the rotten, hollow, and decayed ſtate of almoſt every tree arrived to maturity. Look to the foreſts; we do not there ſee ſo much deformity, ſo many ſymptoms of diſeaſe. This argues that ſomething is amiſs.

Nature is continually holding out intimations of her deſigns, would men but attend to them. Her operations are always correct, and never directed to deceive; and he who follows nature, watches her intimations, ſeconds her efforts, and ſtudies her deſigns, is unqueſtionably the ableſt phyſician, the beſt ſurgeon, and the moſt ſucceſsful cultivator.

On the cutting off of a limb, or the beating off of the dark from a tree, what follows? A new bark or kind of callous ring ariſes, gradually extending itſelf to cover the wound; plainly intimating, that the denuded part cannot be left expoſed to

the direct influence of the ſun, and of the weather, without injury to the tree. If the limb cut off be ſmall, and the tree young, nature, unaſſiſted, generally effects her purpoſe, and covers the wound with new wood and bark. But if the limb be large, or the tree old, her intentions are uſually fruſtrated; the wound is covered but in part. Nature failing in her efforts, the callous ring or lip ceaſes to be extended, forming a hollow or cavity of the central part, where the rain or ſnow is very apt to lodge, which, penetrating between the bark and the wood, dried and cracked by hard froſts or a warm ſun, promotes that fermentation with the natural juices, which is the certain ſource of diſeaſe and rottenneſs; which extending further every year, the tree ſoon becomes hollow, and goes to decay. Such is the ſtate and the untimely end of many of our fruit trees.

What ſkin is to an animal, the ſame is bark to a plant or tree. They are the *citadels of life*, and cannot be broken through without injury and diſeaſe, or even death, unleſs the breaches be repaired. How, therefore, to repair all ſuch breaches in trees, whether cauſed by pruning or by accidental injury; how to aſſiſt nature in her efforts, ſo as to heal all wounds, however extenſive, inflicted in them, covering the tree again with new, freſh bark; nay more, how actually to fill up hollow and decayed trees with new and ſound wood, ſo as to leave no ſpot or blemiſh; how to do all theſe things, it may be gratifying to many of our readers to know. The proceſs for theſe operations has lately been delivered, in a treatiſe on the culture and management of fruit trees, by WILLIAM FORSYTH, gardener to the king of England. His dependence for theſe extraordinary effects, is on a certain compoſition, applied in a liquid ſtate, and laid over the wounded or injured part of the tree with a (painter's) bruſh. This compoſition is aſſerted to be of a ſoft and healing nature, poſſeſſing an abſorbent and an adheſive quality, and by reſiſting the force of waſhing rains, the contraction of nipping froſts, and the effects of a warm ſun or drying winds, effectually excludes the pernicious influence of a changeable atmoſphere, while the proceſs of healing regularly advances underneath, till the wounded or injured part is completely filled up with new wood and covered with freſh bark. This method of Mr. Forſyth's, for healing and reſtoring wounded and decayed trees, ſoon attracted the notice of many gentlemen of high rank and of government. The following are his words to the commiſſioners, appointed by parliament to examine into the efficacy of his compoſition.

"After many years cloſe application, and ſtrictly critical obſervation, I am fully convinced, that upon the exciſion of the decayed part, and the application of a compoſition, it is poſſible to heal *any wounded tree*, and even to reſtore it to its former health, if there be only an *inch or two* of bark remaining, to carry on the circulation of the vegetable economy. This is no theory, but is demonſtrated by a great variety of experiments on fruit and foreſt trees in his majeſty's gardens at Kenſington, now under my care; and which trees, upon examination, have convinced all thoſe who viewed them, of the practicability of producing the fineſt, cleaneſt, and moſt prolific branches from ſtumps in a ſtate of decay; and with confidence I can aſſert, that I have ſucceeded ſo well with his majeſty's fruit trees, that by cutting out the diſeaſed and dead wood, the trees have produced more and finer fruit in two and three years, than a tree newly planted will in thirteen or fourteen years."

After a very attentive and minute examination into the proceſs and mode of cure by Mr. Forſyth, as well as the effects which his remedy has produced on trees of various kinds and ages in the royal gardens at Kenſington, the ſeveral objects of their inquiry being followed by the cleareſt conviction of the great public utility which would reſult from a general application of the remedy, the commiſſioners were pleaſed to make a repreſentation of it to the lords of his majeſty's treaſury, under whoſe ſanction it was ſubmitted to the conſideration of the houſe of commons, an addreſs preſented to the crown, and £4000 ordered by his majeſty to be given Mr. Forſyth, for making known to the public the materials of his compoſition, with the method of preparing it, as well as the mode of its application; all which we ſhall now lay before our readers.

"Royal Gardens, Kenſington, May 11, 1791.

"*Directions for making a Compoſition for curing Diſeaſes, Defects, and Injuries, in all kinds of Fruit and Foreſt Trees, and the Method of preparing the Trees and laying on the Compoſition. By* WILLIAM FORSYTH.

"TAKE one buſhel of freſh cow-dung, half a buſhel of lime rubbiſh of old buildings, (that from the ceilings of rooms is preferable,) half a buſhel of wood-aſhes, and a ſixteenth part of a buſhel of pit or river ſand: the three laſt articles are to be ſifted fine before they are mixed; then work them well together with a ſpade, and afterwards with a wooden beater,

until the ſtuff is very ſmooth, like fine plaſter uſed for the ceilings of rooms.

" The compoſition being thus made, care muſt be taken to prepare the tree properly for its application, by cutting away all the dead, decayed, and injured parts, till you come to the freſh ſound wood, leaving the ſurface of the wood very ſmooth, and rounding off the edges of the bark with a draw-knife, or other inſtrument, perfectly ſmooth, which muſt be particularly attended to; then lay on the plaſter about one-eighth of an inch thick, all over the part where the wood or bark has been ſo cut away, finiſhing off the edges as thin as poſſible; then take a quantity of dry powder, of wood aſhes mixed with a ſixth part of the ſame quantity of the aſhes of burnt bones, put it into a tin box with holes in the top, and ſhake the powder on the ſurface of the plaſter, till the whole is covered over with it, letting it remain for half an hour, to abſorb the moiſture; then apply more powder, rubbing it on gently with the hand, and repeating the application of the powder till the whole plaſter becomes a dry ſmooth ſurface.

" All trees cut down near the ground, (for the purpoſe of raiſing new trees or ſhoots from their roots,) ſhould have the ſurface (the top of the ſtump) made quite ſmooth, rounding it off in a ſmall degree, as before mentioned; and the dry powder directed to be uſed afterwards, ſhould have an equal quantity of powder of alabaſter mixed with it, in order the better to reſiſt the dripping of trees and heavy rains.

" If any of the compoſition be left for a future occaſion, it ſhould be kept in a tub, or other veſſel, and urine of any kind poured on it, ſo as to cover the ſurface, otherwiſe the atmoſphere will greatly hurt the efficacy of the application.

" Where lime rubbiſh of old buildings cannot be eaſily got, take pounded chalk, or common lime, after having been ſlacked a month at leaſt.

" As the growth of the tree will gradually affect the plaſter, by raiſing up its edges next the bark, care ſhould be taken, where that happens, to rub it over with the finger, when occaſion may require, (which is beſt done when moiſtened by rain,) that the plaſter may be kept whole, to prevent the air and wet from penetrating into the wound."

" *Additional Directions for Making and Uſing the Compoſition.*

" TO the foregoing directions for making and applying the compoſition, it is neceſſary to add the following.

"As the beſt way of uſing the compoſition is found, by experience, to be in a liquid ſtate; it muſt, therefore, be reduced to the conſiſtence of pretty thick paint, by mixing it up with a ſufficient quantity of urine and ſoap-ſuds, and laid on with a painter's bruſh. The powder of wood aſhes and burnt bones is to be applied as before directed, patting it down with the hand.

"When trees are become hollow, you muſt ſcoop out all the rotten, looſe, and dead parts of the trunk, till you come to the ſolid wood, leaving the ſurface ſmooth; then cover the hollow, and every part where the canker has been cut out, or branches lopped off, with the compoſition; and, as the edges grow, take care not to let the new wood come in contact with the dead, part of which it may be ſometimes neceſſary to leave; but cut out the old dead wood as the new advances, keeping a hollow between them, to allow the new wood room to extend itſelf, and thereby fill up the cavity, which it will do in time, ſo as to make, as it were, a new tree. If the cavity be large, you may cut away as much at one operation as will be ſufficient for three years; but in this you are to be guided by the ſize of the wound, and other circumſtances. When the new wood, advancing from both ſides of the wound, has almoſt met, cut off the bark from both the edges, that the ſolid wood may join, which, if properly managed, it will do, leaving only a ſlight ſeam in the bark. If the tree be very much decayed, do not cut away all the dead wood at once, which would weaken the tree too much, if a ſtandard, and endanger its being blown down by the wind: it will, therefore, be neceſſary to leave part of the dead wood at firſt, to ſtrengthen the tree, and to cut it out by degrees, as the new wood is formed. If there be any canker or gum oozing, the infected parts muſt be pared off, or cut out with a proper inſtrument. When the ſtem is very much decayed and hollow, it will be neceſſary to open the ground and examine the roots."

Thus have we given the outlines of a work, which has excited much attention in the natural world. Mr. Forſyth's method of treating fruit and foreſt trees, has alike ſucceeded in the cold atmoſphere of Ruſſia, under the burning ſuns of India, and, in a variety of inſtances, has been adopted in America. We ſhall now add the following extracts from letters of good authority, ſhewing what confidence is to be attached to this mode of treating fruit and foreſt trees, by Mr. Forſyth.

Extract from the Introduction to the American Edition, by WILLIAM COBBETT, *who formerly reſided ſome Years in Philadelphia, to Mr.* JAMES PAUL, *ſenior, of Buſtleton, in Pennſylvania.*

"DURING the laſt ſummer, (1801) I went with a party of friends, to be an eye witneſs of the effects (of which I had heard ſuch wonders related) of this gentleman's [Mr. Forſyth's] mode of cultivating and curing trees; and though my mind had received a ſtrong prepoſſeſſion in its favor, what I ſaw very far ſurpaſſed my expectation. Mr. Forſyth, whoſe book was not then publiſhed, did us the favor to ſhew us the manuſcript of it, and alſo the drawings for the plates, which are now to be found at the end of the work. After having read thoſe parts of the manuſcript which more immediately referred to the drawings, we went into the gardens, and there ſaw every tree which the drawings were intended to repreſent, and of which we found them to be a moſt exact repreſentation.

"We examined theſe trees from the ground to the topmoſt branches; we counted the joints in the wood, aſcertained the time and extent of its growth, and, in ſhort, verified every fact that the book related. To raiſe fine flouriſhing wood from an old, cankered, gummy, decayed ſtem; to raiſe as much wood on that ſtem in three years, as could have been raiſed on the fineſt young tree in twelve years; to take the rotten wood from the trunk, to replace it with ſound wood, actually to fill up the hollows, and of a mere ſhell to make a full, round, and ſolid trunk: all this ſeems incredible, but of all this we ſaw indubitable proof."

Extract of a Letter from PETER W. YATES, *Eſq. of Albany, dated September*, 1803, *to the Editors of the American Edition of Mr. Forſyth's Treatiſe on Fruit Trees.*

"TO renovate diſeaſed trees faſt haſtening to decay, and to increaſe the quantity and meliorate the quality of the fruit, in the way by him [Mr. Forſyth] preſcribed, ſeemed to me almoſt incredible; but, as in the animal kingdom, deſperate remedies are ſometimes applied to cure deſperate diſeaſes, and the ſkilful ſurgeon will amputate a limb to ſave the body, I was induced to attempt it in the vegetable kingdom, and therefore heſitated not a moment to make the experiment. I purſued the mode of proceſs preſcribed by Mr. Forſyth. One of my firſt experiments was in May, 1796, on a young bearing (Boncretien) Pear tree, the bark whereof, as well as the alburnum or ſap-wood, and the heart-wood, were dead from the

ground upwards about five feet. I cut away all the dead part, leaving nothing but the bark on the oppoſite ſide, and applied the compoſition. The effects were ſoon viſible. The external part of the wound (which compoſed about the one-third part of the trunk) was in a few days ſurrounded by a callus or lip, which continued to increaſe, until the ſap-flow was obſtructed and ſtagnated by the next autumnal froſt; but by the ſubſequent annual flow of the juices, the callus increaſed, ſo as to fill the wounded part with new wood. The old and new wood united, and is covered with new bark.

"I forbear giving a particular detail of any more individual inſtances; let it ſuffice for me to ſay, that I at the ſame time made ſimilar experiments on ſome Plum, Cherry, Peach, and Apricot trees, and have annually, in the vernal months, continued the operation on ſuch of my fruit trees as became infected; ſome of which are almoſt healed, and others in a progreſſive ſtate of improvement; nor has any one caſe of failure occurred, where all the defective wood was carefully extirpated, and the compoſition duly applied.

"I am therefore fully ſatisfied, that Mr. Forſyth's remedy affords a radical cure for diſeaſes, defects, and injuries in all kinds of fruit trees; and that it may with equal ſucceſs and advantage be applied in this climate as in England. But whether in a more northern or ſouthern latitude, an alteration in the conſiſtence of the compoſition may or may not be requiſite, in order to ſuit the extremes of heat and cold, time and experience will demonſtrate.

"Encouraged by the ſucceſs of theſe trials and experiments, I have made it a practice, in pruning my fruit trees, eſpecially where large amputations are made, to apply ſome of the compoſition to every wound; it prevents the exuding of the vegetable juices through the wounded parts; it aids and precipitates the healing of the wounds, promotes the vigor and health of the trees, and adds to the ſize and flavor of the fruit."

Extract from the ſame, on the proper Time for the Pruning of Trees.

"TO autumn and winter pruning, may be attributed the diſeaſes and rapid decay of many fruit trees in ſeveral orchards; for then the ſap-flow is on the decline, and ſtagnated; the wounds are expoſed to the inclemency of the weather, which produces canker and mortification, and they periſh. The practice of pruning in the ſpring, when the ſap juice is in briſk

motion, is preferable to any other ſeaſon of the year. Mr. Forſyth's reaſons for this are, in my opinion, forcible and concluſive."

Some further obſervations on this ſubject, and how far this mode of treating fruit trees, by Mr. Forſyth, may be advantageouſly adopted by the people in theſe ſtates, may be expected in our next number.

MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES.

ARTICLE I.

Obſervations on the Importance of accurate Records being kept of the Diſeaſes and Deaths in every Town.—Miniſters the beſt ſituated for the keeping of ſuch Records; communicated in a Letter from the Rev. EBENEZER HILL; *dated Maſon, December,* 1805. *To which is added, ſome topographical Deſcription of the Town, together with a Bill of Mortality for eight Years.*

TO DR. D. ADAMS.

I HAVE been long perſuaded, that an accurate record of deaths and diſeaſes, kept in the ſeveral towns in a country, publiſhed annually, and collected and preſerved in ſome public regiſter, would not only form a hiſtory of the progreſs and decline of diſeaſes, but might greatly aſſiſt in the improvement of the medical art. Such a record appears highly important, in a country like this, rapidly increaſing in population, agricultural improvement, and refinement, not to ſay luxury.

Some topographical deſcription of the place, as well as number of inhabitants, manner of living, &c. may render ſuch publications more uſeful, eſpecially in determining whether, and if ſo, how diſeaſes progreſs, in proportion to the increaſe of population, cultivation of the land, and changes in the mode of living.

There are no perſons who appear to be placed in a more favorable ſituation to keep ſuch records, than the ſettled miniſters in our ſeveral towns, as they are not only generally called to attend funeral ſolemnities, but alſo to viſit the chambers of the ſick, in their ſocieties. And as far as this may have even a remote tendency to alleviate the miſeries of their fellow creatures, it cannot be conſidered an object unworthy their attention. I doubt not moſt of my fathers and brethren

have kept records far more critical and uſeful than I have been able to do; and that they will need no further inducement to make public ſuch communications as are important, but only to have a proper repoſitory for them; ſuch your *Medical and Agricultural Regiſter* promiſes to be. Thoſe who have not been careful to preſerve ſuch records, it is preſumed, have neglected it becauſe they had no proſpect of further uſefulneſs, than merely their own ſatisfaction. It is hoped this excuſe will now be removed.

Agreeably with your requeſt, I ſend you with this, my record of marriages, births, and deaths for the paſt year; and in addition, ſome extracts from my bill of mortality for eight years paſt: if thought worthy attention, they are at your ſervice. You have, ſir, my warmeſt wiſhes for ſucceſs in your promiſingly uſeful undertaking.

Your friend and humble ſervant,
EBENEZER HILL.

Maſon, December, 1805.

Topographical Deſcription of MASON.

MASON, in New Hampſhire, is ſituated in the vicinity of the Monadnock mountains. It lies about ſix miles north and ſouth, and five miles eaſt and weſt. The ſurface is hilly, and the hills generally large ſwells. The ſoil, in moſt parts of the town, is ſtrong and good, but rocky. There are no natural ponds, nor extenſive meadows: the ſtreams are rapid. The vallies are narrow, and the inhabitants moſtly ſettled on the high lands. The firſt permanent ſettlement in the town was in the year 1752. It was incorporated in 1768; at which time the number of rateable inhabitants was only 76. The preſent number, and increaſe of population of late, may be nearly known by the cenſus taken in the year 1800, which gives the number 1179.

Bill of Mortality for eight Years, ending November 1805.

Years.	Births.	Deaths.
1798	42	15
1799	40	6
1800	30	12
1801	33	16
1802		16
1803	35	21
1804	29	16
1805	34	20
Total, deaths		122

Complaints.	
Conſumption	27
Dyſentary	20
Fever	13
Quinſy	8
Convulſions	8
Palſy	2
Canker-raſh	2
Dropſy	3
Jaundice	2

Complaints.	
Rickets	1
Gravel	1
Diabetes	1
Worms & Cank.	1
Hydroceph. Int.	1
Do. and Spina Bifida	1
Hydrophobia	1
Mortification	1

Complaints.	
Eryſipelas	1
Hooping Cough	2
Salt Rheum	1
Drowned	1
Suddenly	3
Still born	10
Child birth	1
Old age	8
Unknown	2

CONSUMPTION.

No.	*Ages.*	*No.*	*Months.*
1	infant.	1	in Feb.
4	under 20	2	— March.
6	— 25	4	— April.
6	— 30	6	— May.
1	— 35	1	— June.
1	— 40	1	— July.
2	— 45	3	— Sept.
2	— 50	3	— Oct.
0	— 55	2	— Nov.
4	— 60	3	— Dec.
2	— 65	1	—

DYSENTARY.

6 children; 4 in Nov. and Dec. 1800, all in one neighborhood and family connexion; 2 in Oct. 1801.

1 man about 60, in Nov. 1800; and 1 woman about 40, in June, 1801; both in the same family connexion with the 4 above mentioned.

6 in August and Sept. 1803, all under 5 years.

FEVER.

1800, 1 bilious putrid, Jan.; 1 nervous, June.

1802, 1 in Jan.; 2 in March, above 60; 1 in April, above 30; 1 in Sept. under 12.

1803, 1 in Feb. aged 14; 1 in August, 27; 1 in Sept. 16.

Remarks.

1801.—Of old age, a woman, aged 97; of a feeble conſtitution and febrile habit, till advanced 40 years.

1803.—This year a fever of the bilious kind prevailed in this town, but moſtly confined to one corner. From the firſt of June to the laſt of December, 51 perſons were attacked with it. But very few inſtances occurred, where the fever made its appearance in a family, and any of the family eſcaped it.

1805.—Very ſuddenly, a perſon recovering from a fever, and able to walk the houſe; without any previous complaint, ſhe fell from her chair and immediately expired. This year hooping cough has been epidemic in this town.

It may, perhaps, be worthy of remark, that out of 60 adults, who have died in this town in the laſt eight years, 27 have been ſwept away by conſumption; only 6 more by all other diſeaſes than by this very formidable one. The proportion has been nearly the ſame for 15 years, only 12 more by all other diſeaſes. Of the 27 victims to this fatal diſorder, in the laſt eight years, 17 were females.

ARTICLE II.

A Caution to Perſons expoſed to extreme Cold.

ONE effect of extreme cold, on the human body, ſeems to be that of producing a ſtrong and almoſt unconquerable, diſpoſition to ſleep. This appears evident, upon recollecting the effects of cold, as deſcribed in the firſt voyage of captain Cook, for making diſcoveries in the ſouthern hemiſphere. During his ſtay at *Terra del Fuego*, Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander, with a party compoſed of draughtſmen, &c. had made an excurſion into the interior of the country. It being eight in

the evening, the blaſts of wind very piercing, and the ſnow falling thick, they were paſſing through a ſwamp, towards a wood, in the covert of which they propoſed to build a hut, and kindle a fire, to defend themſelves from the ſeverity of the weather. Dr. Solander, having often paſſed over mountains in coſd countries, was ſenſible, that extreme cold, when joined with fatigue, occaſions a drowſineſs which is not eaſily reſiſted: he therefore entreated his friends to keep in motion, however diſagreeable it might be to them. His words were, "Whoever ſits down, will ſleep; and whoever ſleeps, will wake no more." Every one ſeemed accordingly armed with reſolution; but, on a ſudden, the cold became ſo intenſe, as to threaten the moſt dreadful effects. It was now very remarkable, that the doctor himſelf, who had ſo forcibly admoniſhed and alarmed his party, was the firſt that inſiſted to be ſuffered to repoſe. In ſpite of the moſt earneſt entreaties of his friends, he lay down amidſt the ſnow; and it was with difficulty they kept him awake. One of the black ſervants alſo became weak and faint, and was on the point of following this bad example. A party was therefore detached, to make a fire at the firſt commodious ſpot they ſhould find. Mr. Banks and four more remained with the doctor and Richmond the black, who with the utmoſt difficulty were perſuaded to come on; and when they had traverſed the greateſt part of the ſwamp, they expreſſed their inability of going any further. When the black was told, that if he remained there he would ſoon be frozen to death, his reply was, that he was ſo much exhauſted with fatigue, that death would be a relief to him. Dr. Solander ſaid, he was not unwilling to go, but that he muſt firſt take ſome ſleep; ſtill perſiſting in acting contrary to the opinion which he had himſelf delivered to the company. Thus reſolved, they both ſat down, ſupported by ſome buſhes, and in a ſhort time fell aſleep. Intelligence now came from the advanced party, that a fire was kindled about a quarter of a mile further on the way. Mr. Banks then awoke the doctor, who had already almoſt loſt the uſe of his limbs, though it was but a few minutes ſince he ſat down; nevertheleſs, he conſented to go on: but every meaſure taken to relieve the black proved ineffectual.

Theſe circumſtances cannot be too generally known. And the minds of thoſe perſons, who in this way may be expoſed to ſuffer, can hardly be ſufficiently fortified with reſolution, to reſiſt a diſpoſition which it is ſo natural to gratify, but which indulged, muſt ſo certainly prove fatal.

NOTES.

NOTE I.——*To Gentlemen of the Clergy.*

WE are desirous of exhibiting, at the close of the present year, a correct, and so far as possible, *a complete* BILL *of* MORTALITY *for the State*; presenting, in one comprehensive view, the number of deaths, ages, sex, and diseases; prevailing epidemics, their accession, progress, and decline. In order to this, it will be required, that the facts necessary to the forming of such a bill, be collected from all the several towns throughout the commonwealth. Wherefore, gentlemen, considering the favorable situation in which you are placed, for the making of such observations,—that many of you are already in the habit of it; and further, persuaded of your promptitude and zeal to co-operate, so far as circumstances and opportunity may place it in your power, in a design, having for its object the ascertaining more effectually the prevalent diseases, their probable causes, mortality, connexion with the seasons, and the comparative healthiness of the several towns in this commonwealth: you are therefore most respectfully solicited to undertake a regular and a correct record of the number of deaths; the date, age, sex, and disease, in each instance of mortality; prevailing epidemics, the time of their accession, their progress, decline, assignable causes, if any may be known, as stagnated waters, uncleanliness, sources of putrefaction, modes of living, &c. states of the weather, and such other observations as to you may appear important to be recorded and known: to which may be added, the number of marriages and of births in each town. These observations for the present year will close with December next; and the sitting of the general court, in January, 1807, will present a very favorable opportunity for forwarding such communications to the bookstore of Messrs. *Manning & Loring*, No. 2, Cornhill. In those towns where there are two or more settled ministers, it will be necessary they have an understanding together, so that their bills, collectively, may be correct for the whole town: and in those towns where there is no settled minister, we beg to be permitted to look to the town-clerk, assisted by the physicians in the place, for the execution of these services.

Also, gentlemen of the clergy in the adjacent states, so far as they may come to a knowledge of our design, will oblige us by like communications.

Every one, on a moment's reflection, must be convinced of the importance of such a general and extended course of observation. In this we hope to receive general patronage; and, in a thing of so much moment, it is our expectation, that every gentleman, of whatever profession in life, so far as he may have an opportunity, will endeavour to promote and extend the knowledge of our design. The thing is very practicable and easy for *all*, but is extremely difficult, and even impossible, to be effected by *one* or a *few*.

NOTE II.——*To the Readers of the Register.*

HOW to afford the *greatest* improvement to the reader, with the *least* expense, has been an object with us, in forming the design of this work. Hence it is, that it appears in the manner in which it is now presented,—*unstitched and without a cover*. To have added these, must have enhanced the price; and to have enhanced the price, must have put it out of the reach of many families, where now the expense will be supportable and easy. We would, however, advise our readers, not to neglect the doing of this themselves. Every family is in the possession of needles and of thread, and we would advise them to stitch each number into some kind of cover, so as to preserve the numbers clean, handy to be referred to on any occasion, and in good order for binding, at the close of the volume.

CONDITIONS OF THE REGISTER.

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